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COMMANDING OFFICER
U. S. NAVAL HOSPITAL
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NH48/ON-3

U. S. NAVAL HOSPITAL

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

November 10, 1942

Captain Michael DeBakey, M.C., U.S.A.R.
Detachment Medical Department
Army Air Forces, Technical Training School
Gulf Port Field, Gulf Port, Mississippi

Dear Mike:

I suppose by this time you have gotten your new hospital set up and are running full blast. I haven't the slightest idea but that you have a very efficient surgical department and I would like very much to be there and see you work. Naturally we were disappointed at not getting you in the Navy but as long as you have gotten your own service in the Army I think you were wise to cast your fortunes with them.

We continue to grow here and are now well over 800 patients. I have a very fine staff and am not doing any professional work at all. So far I have not been able to pick up a plastic man and would like very much to have Neal here with me. I have, however, been promised a plastic surgeon and hope that he will arrive in the next two or three weeks.

We have found the abdominal compression injuries very interesting. When you think of all the things that can happen to a man aboard ship, that is, missile wounds, burns, concussion, compression and submersion, you wonder just what it would take to give him complete protection. In other words, he would have to have a life-preserver that would not only prevent submersion but also concussion, compression and stop penetration of small shell fragments. How to give such protection and still permit enough freedom for a man to work is quite beyond me.

You no doubt have heard that the meeting of the American College of Surgeons has been called off. In a way I am glad of it as it will save me a rather nerve-wracking job. However, had the calling off been done a couple of months sooner it would have saved me considerable work on my paper. Dr. Evans of the University of Virginia has been kind enough to invite me on there to read my paper and I may do that sometime in December. It would have been nice to see you in Cleveland. The Navy Medical Corps appreciated the honor that had been bestowed on them and had planned to have a large delegation present. I would have been glad to have had my associates meet you.

My understanding now is that all the states but five have furnished their quotas of medical officers for the military services. These states are: New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Illinois, and California. We expect ultimately to have a staff here of about 75 medical officers.

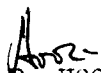
The University of California has just finished their first course on war surgery for Army medical officers. It was a very intensive six-weeks course, and my understanding is that the men got a great deal out of it. Three members of my staff helped out by giving lectures and the whole group came over here for one day's work.

We are now getting the more severely wounded from the South Pacific and we find them a very interesting group. Some of these have the old deep-seated infections that we saw during the last war.

I hope that you will enjoy your new work very much and that you will have time to drop me a line occasionally.

With kindest personal regards always, I am

Sincerely,


F.R. HOOK